

TOWN OF WELAKA **2020** JANUARY 2020

Waste Pro

January 6th – Garbage, Recycle,
 January 13th – Garbage, Recycle
 Yard Trash
 January 20th – Garbage, Recycle,
 January 27th – Garbage, Recycle
 Yard Trash

Please call Waste Pro if you have any questions at 328-5445.

Public Meetings

January 14th, Tues – Zoning Board at 5:30 p.m.; Code Board at 5:45 p.m.; Town Council at 6:30 p.m. at Town Hall. For more information call Town Hall at 386-467-9800.

January 9th, Thurs – Fire Board Meeting at 6:00 p.m. at the Fire Station.

January Meter Readings



January meter readings will begin: Friday, January 17th.

PLEASE HELP CONSERVE WATER!



Remember: Water bill payments can be made anytime of the day or night, even on weekends, by using the "Utility Payment" drop box at the top of the stairs at Town Hall.



Clip This

The Town of Welaka Utility Department is available for water and sewer problems 24 hours a day at 467-8677.
 TDD 800/955-8771

Special Dates

Wednesday, Jan. 1st -
 New Year's Day
 (Town Hall will be closed
 Wednesday, Jan. 1st in
 observance of New Year's Day)



Monday, Jan. 20th –
 Martin Luther King Jr. Day
 (Town Hall will be closed on
 Monday, Jan. 20th in observance
 of Martin Luther King Jr. Day)

I Have A Dream



Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

United Methodist
 Church
 Pancake Breakfast \$4
 Pancakes, Sausage,
 Bacon, Orange Juice
 and Coffee!



Saturday,
 January 4th
 7:30 a.m. – 10 a.m.

NEWSLETTER



We trust that all had a pleasant Christmas and New Year holiday this season. We wish you all a Happy New Year. Let's try and enjoy and commit to ourselves that this will be a joyous year. During Christmas season, we had several functions. I was asked some questions that probably needed to be brought to light again. A couple of times I was asked, why do we have a Newsletter? Not that we don't appreciate it greatly, but why do we have one? So, here's kind of how goes the story. In the late 1990's we were in a turmoil, much more severe than anything that currently happens.

Rumors were rampant. We had very little way to combat them due to resignations. Two appointments were made to the Town Council, Steve Richardson and Curtis Williams, a couple of disparate gentlemen who became very close friends. Mr. Richardson was a late comer to Town. He had been a man of many functions from Superintendent of Public Works and building projects in the Caribbean to a Newspaper Editor in Miami. He was a true joy. One of his questions arose at a meeting one day. Why don't we combat all these rumors and my request to him was, give us a suggestion. He said, how many sheets of paper can you put in an envelope with a Newsletter and the utility bill for a single stamp and we checked and it was four sheets. He said, make a commitment. We will

and I will help put out the Newsletter every month. Our only commitment is that it will be the truth, good, bad or ugly, but it will be the truth and we will keep the public apprised instead of listening to nothing but rumors.

Next question was, how long should we do it? Forever was his answer, and faithfully he supported this until his untimely death, a true loss for us. Again, we are now questioning how that letter originated and why there is substantiation approval. Nowadays, we still try to do the same thing. What happens in Town Hall is public knowledge, and we attempt to make sure you know what happened. We still swear and adhere to the original facts that it will be the truth... good, bad or ugly.

PUBLIC RECORDS



With much diligence and yet again we are requesting further review by the state. We feel that we do understand Public Records. Perhaps some of you in the public do not. We live in a modern world of almost instant correspondence. With Social Media, Facebook and other items, the printed paper once a month doesn't keep quite up to the speed daily of some of the goings on of various modern abilities. However, here is what it boils down to for you. Not only is what's in Town Hall records public, but you will enjoy using Social Media, I.E. coming along by internet. What arrives here becomes Public Record. So not only

are we responsible to all when various members of the community send us emails. Be careful and recognize the fact that your email becomes Public Record once sent to Town Hall. Many loopholes, not necessarily allowing your product to be silenced within the Town Hall. The public can know if they so desire of what you are sending to us.

Over the years that I've served, we have had at least four wonderful Town Clerks previously to current situations. We had a wonderful Clerk who was so intimidated by a certain member of the community, and his threats of personal lawsuits, that she did give up. A fantastic Clerk, but intimidated to death. What a loss it was. However, following that, we had a wonderful applicant that appeared from Orlando. She was in her late thirties and had just spent seven years with State's Attorney's Office in Orlando, she really knew Public Records. Same gentleman that had destroyed the other one now met an adversary who knew what she had to do in Public Records, and made sure that they were done, and would not be intimidated. She placed a sign behind the desk on the wall for all to read: "I cannot create to accommodate a Public Record that is not here. I cannot make it up to satisfy what you want it to say".

We are very fortunate that we had Judy Jones for many years, and that she trained Jennifer McDaniel very well. You may not like the message when you leave Town Hall, but very seldom have I ever heard a complaint against the messenger. Our staff really tries to support the Town in its entirety and fairly. To this day we try and keep our Newsletter upbeat. We gave you

the truth. We do like to encourage happiness. We do want you all to study a little bit of history. Don't be here a couple of years, and not check about the people that were here for a couple of hundred years before you, and what they have done. We are proud of the fact that we can retain some of our simpler forms of enjoyment.

If you weren't happy where you were, you probably won't be happy here because basically we all try to protect and take care of each other. We have survived many communities nearby. Remember, Welaka is still here. The river will still be here after we're gone. We attempt to enjoy it in a manner without totally destroying it. Many of you spend weekends here, many of you use this as a second home, and when I ask the majority of you all to tell us, it is the quiet and laid back life and enjoyment here in Town that keeps you here.

RUMORS



As we progress throughout this year, we're going to be very careful. Let's make sure that some of the false rumors that hurt us that are currently floating around Town do not continue to multiply. The situation recently was thrown upon the public by Social Media as well as the Internet and emails to the Town Hall. This is one thing I wish that every one of you would remember and tell your neighbor, the Town of Welaka's Utility System is not controlled by The Public Service Commission. Municipalities are very clearly outlined in Florida law that they are not under the control of a Public Service Commission. If you

don't believe this and you believe what is being spread, that we are under PSC control, you have been sadly misinformed. We can take complaints all day long and if you can show that they apply to us, but don't take a law from the State of Florida that has no jurisdiction whatsoever over this Municipality and try to beat us over the head with it.

Additionally, people that have been here many years or very few years, if you have a problem with your plumbing, check it out. In the early nineties when we went from undrinkable and unusable water, to a drinkable Town Water System, there were situations that were brought to everybody's attention. One of the things that we advised everybody, when you hook up from the meter to your house, those of you that have had gray poly pipe up to this point, make sure you no longer use this product today. Some complaints do not realize the history of the property they've bought. Certain situations were created by you, by previous homeowners, not us. I mean, very simply put, there's a rule that after discussing with our Engineer, the Water Tower is so many feet above sea level. Certain points in the Town are at some other levels. There is no mechanical pumping from the Water Tower into the water main. It is a gravity fed system from the Water Tower where you don't have to be a genius to understand the rules of elevation and water pressure.

The condominiums have to have sufficient pressure, so it's water can reach the third floor. This was what was calculated in the original change over from private wells to community water service. Other matters continued to arise.

Certainly, your own doing should not affect the happiness of all the rest of the Town chain.

WHAT IS HAPPINESS?



Certainly, some of the things that have occurred this year and are continuing to show the heart of not only our Municipality, but many individuals in our community. We see a wonderful balance between various parties throughout Town who have no other thoughts than the betterment and the care of each other.

Programs for Child Care and Elders, care for those that are less fortunate. All of these, have people stepping forward. Truly, good hearted individuals banded together with others is what makes us the town we are. We bring to your attention that under much diligence Harriet Vanslyke has events, she has been able to gain a food distribution program for here in Town. Currently, there'll be a once a month situation. We will keep you apprised in the Newsletter. January will be the first month of distribution. We aren't guaranteeing that we'll be completely smooth, but we have allowed the Town facilities to be used as it progresses here for January. We will put notices on the Town bulletin boards. Let's all help her and those involved to make this a monthly benefit. We truly miss Al Kaufman. It's been almost four years. He worked part time on various little jobs that helped beautify the Town. We miss him more and more as time goes on.

Currently, we have a part-time person that we're going to try and alleviate some of these situations with quite little pain done around Town. A little cleanup, just little things that make you feel a little more at home. Slightly prouder of being here in Town than you are in the County. This is what makes us feel good. Each and every one of the Town Staff has certain talents that they bring to their job. For the amount we spend on help, we gain greatly.

WHY DON'T WE HAVE A CITY MANAGER?



Your Council backs the Town Staff. If you feel like spending \$100,000 and can't find a City Manager, so be it. We seem to move along pretty well. Yes, there are some very talented people here in Town. I've listened to some of them. I've made some wonderful friendships over the last 25 years, wouldn't have traded it for anything.

The Bible clearly tells us that God, as he did with Job will not test us beyond what we can endure and hopefully that we are blessed more than ever. So come on down and talk to me. Talk to the Town, we have a Council that's willing to listen. We are not here to be humiliated, attempted to be destroyed or made fool. So there are thousands of places that you can be. Don't destroy a place that we are proud of, and happy with. As time progresses and is into February, become involved, Springfest will take place and we encourage you to be sure that you spend a day and a half here enjoying that.

ENJOYMENTS



Yes, it does appear that we might have another restaurant or two. We might have this business or that benefit coming. We hope that we retain a flavor that we have and that we tried to tell you. Please get out and enjoy each other. Find a little happiness and if you can't, just don't make us miserable as yourself. We are a happy Town. We have enjoyments far beyond what most Municipalities have enjoyed. God has certainly blessed us with the people that have been here for us and we have been able to move this Town to where we are.

If you have something that makes sense, make sure that you let us know. Well, we might not be where we are now. We had to listen to each other. We have situations that forced many of us to become involved. We have people of depth with 50 and 60 years of service here in Town, get to know them. I've told so many people and I find it does get results. Trace your time here in Town through others that have been here for centuries. Full of good stories of people that have survived and made this Town what it is. Enjoy the time.

I think a little bit about what I've just said. Ask me questions, I freely discuss with anyone that shows the forward movement of this Town. It has changed in the last 25 years. We realize that we have gone from a long list of full lifetime members to those of you who have been with us a short period of time. Again, find someone that will help you with some of that history of Town. Come down, it doesn't hurt to volunteer. We have some wonderful volunteers currently. Get

to know some of them and you will find your life will be much better.

Let's make sure that we give Bertha Blakely some credit for her Christmas cactus at this time of year. She's a woman that has found her happiness here in Town.

CHRISTMAS PARADE

CHRISTMAS PARADE

During the week prior to our parade, it appeared that severe storms would be with us and then we might have to call a halt. Nevertheless, faith has rewarded us in many previous years. The skies opened up and we had a wonderful day on the 21st. A few of our participants had called on Friday canceling worried about the weather, but Saturday morning it started out as wonderfully as we have done in so many years. Previously, we opened the parade at 12 o'clock sharp with our flyover. We kind of remember this from Jim Goolsby's initiation. As always, I was amazed at the amount of people who were along the parade route in golf carts and wondering how were we really going to fare with golf carts. No need to worry. It was one of the best assemblages here. That Sunday, following this parade, brought nothing but upbeat comments from our community members. What can you say about Santa Claus? Quickly, patiently, he moved through a multitude of children. Thank you so much to all of the assistants that worked with us in making sure that this was set up. What a moment of enjoyment.

Pictures with Santa are available to those that desire by contacting Brian Walsh. Thank you, Brian, for

these pictures. A special thanks to the women that worked so tirelessly, keeping Santa supplied with his gifts for the children. What leads you to believe that it might be a soaker for the evening boat parade? Again, where was your faith? The boat parade went off without a hitch. I believe we had a total of 10 or 11 in the boat parade. Thanks to all of you who so tirelessly decorate your boats. Again, nothing but good comments. We certainly thank those that do make this a point of their Christmas season.

Finally, Sunday, we all receive our messages as what the true season is and hopefully that you planned to attend one of the Christmas Eve services around Town. As we say, nearly every month we are a blessed small Town. I hope you all realize this. I know our Council truly do work towards appreciating and caring or all of you with a little bit of faith, and the ability to stand by our Town. As we say, so often all things can be accomplished through God's grace. Again, we say as we enter in this New Year, find a little happiness and we'll all feel so much better. Thank you for so much for participating, observing, and enjoying our Christmas weekend celebration, God has been good to us.



**TOWN OF WELAKA
ZONING BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2019
@ 5:30 P.M.
WELAKA TOWN HALL**

1. The meeting was called to order by Finch at 5:30 p.m.
2. Roll Call: Kevin Finch – present, Allen Rusek – present,

Lenore Toole – present, Harriet Vanslyke – present, Les Thomas – present, and Town Attorney Allen Scott – absent.

3. Approval of Minutes of Meeting of November 12, 2019. Finch asked if any deletions, corrections or additions – there were none. Thomas made a motion to accept Minutes of Meeting of November 12, 2019, second by Rusek. Motion carried 5-0.

4. Old Business: Finch stated that they want some answers in a timely manner from Allen Scott regarding “short-term rentals”. Finch stated that Scott has been given input. Sands stated that we are without a County Attorney, and we are using this as a Vacuum System issue with 22 residents outside of the Town with concrete driveways, and we need an Inter-local Agreement. We need to elevate them. We could not get to the overflowed tanks with the Airbnb cars sitting on top. They were fishing. We could not get to the pods. Sands stated that the only Inter-local is with the Sheriff’s Office. Sands stated that they cannot attack us through our Utility System through Airbnb. Finch stated that Scott needs to give us an update. Toole asked that if the people renting out their homes, if we can send notices out to them. Sands stated that we can. Finch stated to bring an update to next month’s meeting.

5. New Business: none

6. Request to Speak: none

7. Audience Participation: none

8. Vanslyke made a motion to adjourn at 5:41 p.m., second by Rusek. Motion carried 5-0.

**TOWN OF WELAKA
CODE ENFORCEMENT MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2019
@ 5:45 P.M.**

WELAKA TOWN HALL

1. The meeting was called to order by Finch at 5:45 p.m.

2. Roll Call: Kevin Finch - present, Allen Rusek – present, Lenore Toole – present, Harriet Vanslyke – present, Les Thomas – present, and Town Attorney Allen Scott – absent.

3. Approval of Minutes of Meeting of November 12, 2019. Finch asked if any deletions, corrections or additions – there were none. Rusek made a motion to accept the Minutes of Meeting of November 12, 2019 as written, second by Vanslyke. Motion carried 5-0.

4. Old Business: Sewer Connection Update: McDaniel stated that she has not received the Certified “green card” back on 1007 Front Street, so Ray Joseph has not been properly notified. Finch stated that we are waiting on the agreement with FGUA to be responsible for the lift station to be presented to the Council. Sands stated that Randy Leininger talked to the Plumbing Company today, and they wanted to wait and do everyone at once. Sands stated that we cannot do that. Sands stated that Bellamy stated that it will be at least two (2) weeks until they can do anything. Sands stated that we have made the sewer lines available for these residents needing to hook-up.

5. New Business: none

6. Request to Speak: none

7. Audience Participation: none

8. Vanslyke made a motion to adjourn at 5:55 p.m., second by Toole. Motion carried 5-0.

**TOWN OF WELAKA
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2019
@ 6:30 P.M.**

WELAKA TOWN HALL

1. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Sands at 6:30 p.m.

2. Invocation was given by Finch.

3. Pledge of Allegiance led by Washington.

4. Roll Call: Mayor Gordon Sands - present, Councilman Willie Washington - present, Councilman Jamie Watts - present, Councilwoman Jessica Finch - present, Councilwoman Marianne Milledge - present, and Town Attorney Allen Scott - absent.

5. Sands stated that we have been pretty fortunate in our selection around Town. Sands asked Harriet to stand up. Sands stated that we are so happy that you are in Town, and for all that you do. Sands stated that all that this woman has done, she has taken upon herself a food monthly service. You make the Town and all of us happy. Appreciation Plaque was awarded to Harriet Vanslyke with “Helping Hands”, we are so blessed with you. Harriet stated she does yard sales and everything. Harriet said that she is not the only one Patricia Gordon, doing this for five (5) years, we stay in the back and do and go because I (Harriet) truly believe that this is what God wants me to do. God shows her how to do it. Welaka is blessed because God is talking to her and she hopes he never stops. Once Harriet learns the food program, it will be here. Harriet stated to love her, and ask if you can help, she will say no, but one day she will say yes. Keep praying for her. Sands stated that recently when he was cleaning up around home he found pictures, of when the Council looked pretty darn good. Sands thanked Willie for his service that you’ve given us. Sands stated that the Town received a new flag to mount out front of the Town Hall. Clint Swartz made this, and there are still a lot of us still proud



of our Country. Barbara Fender paid for that flag at the Town Hall.

6. Approval of Minutes of Meeting of November 12, 2019. Sands asked if any deletions, corrections or additions - there were none. Watts motioned to approve Minutes of Meeting of November 12, 2019, second by Washington. Motion carried 5-0.

7. Approval of Minutes of Special Meeting of November 12, 2019. Sands asked if any deletions, corrections or additions – there were none. Watts motioned to approve corrected Minutes of Special Meeting of November 12, 2019, second by Finch. Motion carried 5-0.

8. Approval of Minutes of Special Budget Meeting of December 2, 2019. Sands asked if any deletions, corrections or additions – there were none. Watts motioned to approve corrected Minutes of Special Budget Meeting of December 2, 2019, second by Washington. Motion carried 5-0.

9. Request to Speak: none

10. Ordinance 2019-10. Municipal Election Year 2020 (second reading): Sands read Ordinance 2019-10 – an Ordinance providing for the Municipal Election Date in Welaka, Florida, for the 2020 Election Year; reserving decision on dates for filing individual petitions for qualification and deadline dates for same, making the Election date herein specified provisional and not permanent. Be it ordained by the Town Council of Welaka, Florida that the Municipal Election for the Town of Welaka, Florida, for the Election Year 2020 will be held on March 17, 2020 at 638 3rd Avenue Welaka, FL with the polls open from 7:00 a.m. on said date. The Council shall hereafter set the method, manor and dates for qualifying candidates choosing to run for public office. Watts made a motion to approve Ordinance 2019-10 for the Municipal Election Year 2020 on second reading this 10th day of December 2019, second by Milledge. Motion carried 5-0. Results of the Election will be posted on the front door of the Town Hall, followed by the Swearing- In Ceremony that Friday.

11. Walsh + Logic IT Contract: Sands asked Finch if she can get with Brain Walsh to discuss the Town’s 2020 IT Needs Analysis. Sands stated that we will table until the next meeting for continuance of service.

12. Code and Zoning Recommendations: Sands stated that we are pushing our way deeper to time share, and it was brought to attention to Code Committee.

13. Utility Matters: Sands read information received by Florida Rural Water Association stating “Town of Welaka is granted RIGHTS by the Florida Legislature to own, operate, manage, or control water and wastewater systems under doctrine of “home-rule”.

14. Town Matters:
Mayor Sands Report: Christmas Parade: Sands stated that we have the Air Force, Forestry and Kim Hilton, amongst others for our annual Christmas Parade on the 21st.
FPL: Sands stated that we are switching to all LED lights for the streets and the parks.

Councilwoman Milledge Report: Milledge stated that they are getting a Cedar tree, 7-8ft tall for \$105.

Councilwoman Finch Report: Finch stated CivicCMS is working on a website template. Finch stated that we signed the contract last week, and the website is in process. Finch stated that 30 cats total have been trapped and sprayed and neutered.

Councilman Washington Report: Washington stated that the Dollar General needs to straighten up the outside of their building.

Councilman Watts Report: none
15. Audience Participation: Kendrea Welch formally introduce herself as the new Utility Clerk in Welaka. Welch explained several ways to receive, and pay your bill. Welch stated not to hesitate to call her at any time.

16. Police Matters: Porath stated that on the 23rd was the first Woman’s Self Awareness class at the First Baptist Church in Welaka. Porath stated that the feedback was

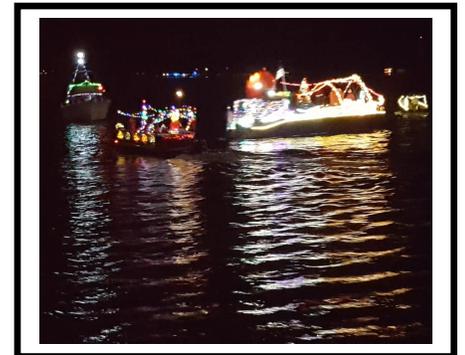
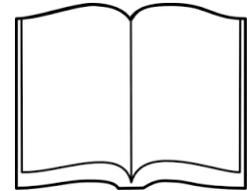
to expand. We will move forward with this to be as safe as possible.

17. Attorney Matters: none

18. Watts made a motion to adjourn at 7:05 p.m., second by Milledge. Motion carried 5-0.

“We will open the book.
Its pages are blank. We
are going to put words on
them ourselves. The book
is called Opportunity and
its first chapter is New
Year's Day.”

– Edith Lovejoy Pierce



23rd Annual



Welaka Springfest

Town Hall, 400 4th Avenue,
Welaka

Friday & Saturday
February 14 & 15, 2020

8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Food, Music, Arts & Crafts, Gifts, Antiques

Kids Games & Activities, Demonstrations and More!

Cake & Pie



Chili

Community

Contest

Cook-Off

Yard Sale



Saturday-
starts @
2:00 p.m.
Must
Register to
Win
Great
Prizes

Saturday-
starts @
11 a.m.
Must
Register to
Win
Great
Prizes

Saturday-free space
to in-town residents,
\$10 for out-of-town

Vendor applications available at Town Hall, 400 4th Ave.

Call (386) 467-9800 for more information.

While in Welaka for the Festival make plans to visit:
Welaka Aquarium and Welaka State Forest!

Welaka Christmas 2019



*****A special "Thank You" to the following: Shrimp R Us and RPS for providing the gift certificates, and Aaron Whitmore (Santa) for your participation this year. A thank you goes out to the volunteers assisting with the Toys-4-Tots including: Helping Hands of Welaka and Friends of Welaka. Thank you Kim Hilton for the musical entertainment.**

